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REMARKS

Claims 1 and 8 have been amended. Claim 2, 5 and 7 have been cancelled. Claims 1, 3-4, 6 and 8 remain pending. Claims 9-10 have been added. Reconsideration and reexamination of the application, as amended, are requested.

Claims 1 and 8 are currently amended in order to more clearly specify the features of the present invention, and do not incorporate new matter therein. New claims 9 and 10 are based on "a sealing member 76 including an elastic material such as rubber or the like formed in a *U-shape* to match the shape of the grooves 75b" on page 8, lines 15 to- 16, in the original specification of the present application, and do not incorporate new matter therein.

The Examiner rejected claim 7 under 35 USC 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite. Claim 7 has been canceled.

The Examiner rejected claims 1, 3, 4, 6-8 under 35 USC 102(b) as being anticipated by Yamamoto (JP 0916264A).

As clearly stated in the currently amended claim 1, a rotary damper of the present invention includes a feature that "said seal part includes: a pair of washers sandwiched between an inner face of the housing of said two chambers and the base part; and a sealing member provided to at least positions of three edges of said vane which seals in a fluid-tight manner between said vane and the inner face of said housing, *said sealing member having ends facing said base part of said vane and contacting outer circumferential surfaces of said washers so as to seal in a fluid-tight manner there between*".

In addition, a rotary damper according to the currently amended claim 8 of the present invention includes a feature of "means for sealing among said shaft, said housing, and said vane, said sealing means including a sealing member mounted on a portion of

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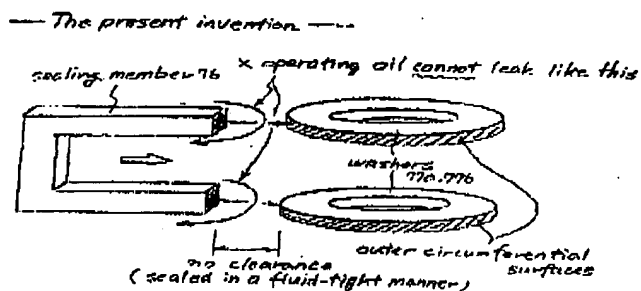
said vane, said sealing member sealing between said vane and said housing, said sealing member having ends facing said shaft, said sealing means further including a pair of washers mounted about said shaft in contact with said housing and extending into said oil chamber, said washers having outer circumferential surfaces, *said ends of said sealing member contacting the outer circumferential surfaces of said washers to provide a seal among said washers, said housing and said vane*".

By employing these features, each of the rotary dampers according to the currently amended claims 1 and 8 obtain the advantageous effect that it is possible to prevent leakage of operating oil through a clearance between the end portions of the sealing member (for example, a sealing member 76 shown in FIG. 10) and the outer circumferential surfaces of the washers (for example, sealing washers 77a and 77b shown in FIG. 10), since the end portions and the outer circumferential surfaces of the washers contact each other so as to seal in a fluid-tight manner therebetween.

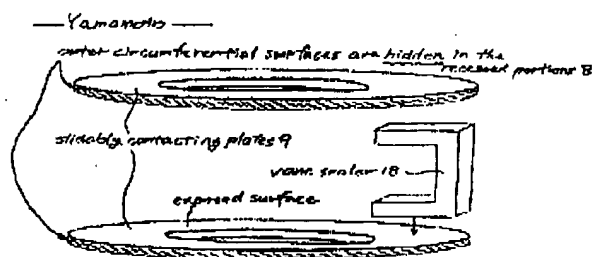
Therefore, the rotary dampers according to currently amended claims 1 and 8 achieve an object of the present invention (i.e., "providing a rotary damper wherein a high damping force is obtained without leakage of the operating oil from the bearing supporting the shaft" on page 2, lines 3 and 4, in the original specification of the present application).

That is, as shown in the following simple illustration, the rotary damper is provided with a sealing member having two ends facing the base part of the vane and contacting *the outer circumferential surfaces* of the washers so as to seal in a fluid-tight manner therebetween, and thereby preventing leakage of the operating oil therethrough.

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On the other hand, a rotary damper of Yamamoto is provided with: slidably contacting plates 9 located in recessed portions 8 of side panels 5, 6; and vane sealer 18 provided to a vane 17 and slidably contacting exposed surfaces of the slidably contacting plates 9 (refer to FIG. 1). The slidably contacting plates 9 are made from wear-resistant material (refer to section [0018]). The rotary damper of Yamamoto has a construction illustrated below.



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Accordingly, the rotary damper of Yamamoto has, at least, the following differences comparing to that of the present invention.

(a) The slidably contacting plates 9 of Yamamoto are provided for the purpose of preventing wearing of the inside surfaces of side panels 5, 6. Thus, the slidably contacting plates 9 of Yamamoto work as wear-resistant parts but do not work as washers, and are therefore not equivalent to the washers 77a, 77b of the present invention. Accordingly, the washers of the rotary damper according to the currently amended claims 1 and 8 are not disclosed or suggested in Yamamoto.

(b) The vane sealers 18 of Yamamoto slidably contact the exposed surfaces of the slidably contacting plates 9, but do not contact the outer circumferential surfaces of the slidably contacting plates 9. Accordingly, Yamamoto neither discloses nor suggests the important feature "ends of the sealing members contact the outer circumferential surfaces of the washers so as to seal in a fluid-tight manner therebetween".

Accordingly, Applicant believes that the currently amended claims 1 and 8 have novelty and non-obviousness over Yamamoto, and therefore should be allowable. In addition, Applicant also believes that dependent claims 3, 4, 6, 9, and 10 also should be allowable due to at least to their dependency on the allowable independent claims 1 and 8.

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In view of the above, it is submitted that the application is in condition for allowance. Reconsideration and reexamination are requested. Allowance of all pending claims at an early date is solicited. Any questions regarding this communication can be directed to the undersigned attorney, Curtis B. Hamre, Reg. No. 29,165 at (612) 455-3802.



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Respectfully submitted,

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